



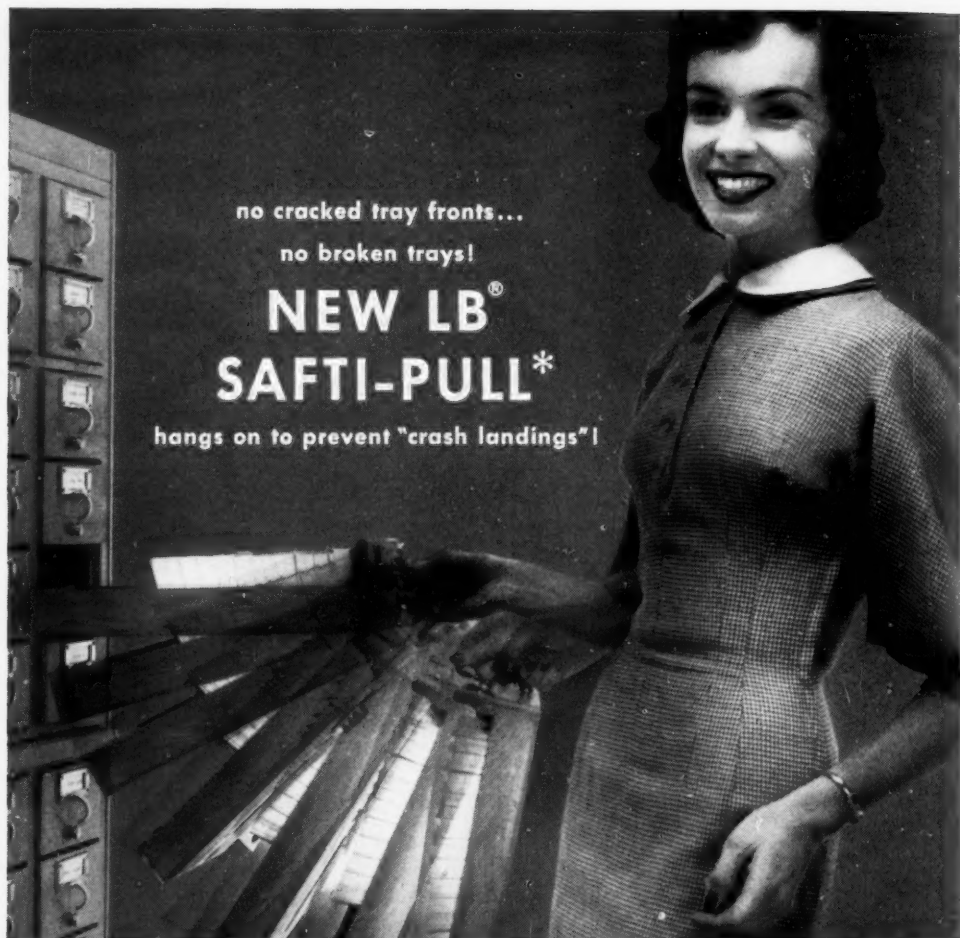
Maryland Libraries

COOPERATION

**SPRING
1958**

VOL. 24, No. 3

Journal of the Maryland Library Association
and the Association of School Librarians



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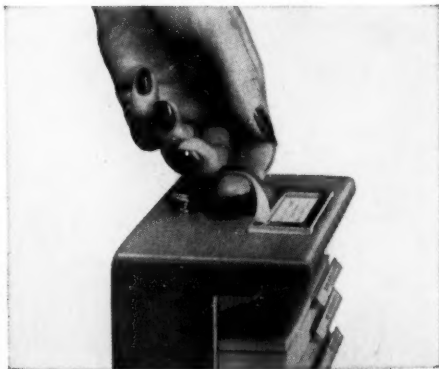
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MARYLAND LIBRARIES

Journal of the Maryland Library Association
and the
Association of School Librarians of Maryland

Vol. 24, No. 3

Spring, 1958

In This Issue

Barber Shops, Book Agents, and Librarians, <i>by Frank N. Jones</i>	55
Communication: The Key to Cooperation, <i>by Nettie B. Taylor</i>	58
Cooperation Between the Library and Community Agencies, <i>by Mrs. Marion E. Hawes</i>	60
One "Magic of Music" Program, <i>by Mrs. H. Thomas Walker</i>	62
What the School Libraries Do, <i>by Elizabeth Hodges</i>	63
Cooperation: A Selected List of Articles Recently Appearing in Library Literature.....	65
Maryland State Documents.....	66
Reference Service Division—Projects Committee.....	68
Obligations and Responsibilities of a State-Wide Association of School Librarians, <i>by Mary Helen Mahar</i>	69

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Barber Shops, Book Agents, and Librarians

by FRANK N. JONES, *Director,*

Peabody Institute Library, Baltimore

The man in the barber chair was getting his hair cut. The man across the room put down a magazine, glanced at the clock, then at the barber, then at his watch. Frowning he picked up a brightly-colored folder and in the universal fashion of people in barber shops and doctors' offices, began to read from the back as if the text were Hebrew or Japanese. But it was plain English in short paragraphs pungent enough to reduce the frown and witty enough to replace it with an interested smile. Moreover it had a few small photographs inside to relieve the printing and on the front page was a lively drawing. Just as the barber was repeating for the second time, "You are next, sir," his preoccupied customer learned from an unobtrusive line under the drawing that he had been reading the latest report of the local public library.

"Unusual example of effective communications," "good publicity," "good public relations;" yes, one might call such a library report all of these things and they would all be true. Not every librarian has the skill or the staff to create its equal, but there is one thing about this little story that every library can match: there is always a barber shop.

There is probably no better example of an "agency other than a library" to illustrate the subject to which this issue of *Maryland Libraries* is dedicated than a plain, ordinary, unsophisticated barber shop. Every village, town, city, district, county or region served by a library is also served by one or more barber shops, and, one might add, beauty parlors. The librarian who prepared and designed the brightly-colored report on a four-page folder was doing a splendid job of good public relations, but he went a step beyond what was required to make it an effective report. He compiled a mailing list of barber shops, hairdressing establishments, medical centers, and secured their cooperation in spreading the latest about his library by the simple device of mailing copies all over town to places where they would fall into the hands of people in general, not just "readers."

Agencies other than libraries cannot be listed and cataloged readily; there are too many of them. Scarcely one out of the wide variety is completely beyond the reach of intelligent cooperation when the occasion is appropriate and the approach is right. But they cannot be saturated with ceaseless appeals and endless repetition and still preserve a cooperative spirit. The wise and effective use of this one channel of good public relations requires the practical application of all the other things that make good public relations what they are. Tact, talent, judgment, ingenuity, and skills of various kinds all contribute, but when it comes to utilizing other agencies one of the first things to emphasize is a good sound working knowledge of what they are in one's own area. In the city a thorough study of the yellow pages in the telephone directory is a fruitful supplement to first-hand knowledge of shops and offices. Such study needs to be pursued ahead of time for its own sake; it will not always work if one waits until the current display is ready except for one vital item that still has to be borrowed.

But using our friends and neighbors to help spread the gospel is only one phase of this kind of cooperation with those not in the library business. Librarians are always, by the very nature of their services, cooperating with people for the benefit of the people. Readers want to talk about their problems and while the librarian is directing them to the information needed, he or she, is in effect cooperating for the benefit of the readers who come to him seeking help. Now I believe librarians have just as much reason to seek cooperation for their own benefit. I also believe that the librarian in the average community is less likely to be turned down than a lot of other agencies when the call for cooperation goes out. Take an example: a certain college library in a small town bore responsibility for general public library service to the community in addition to its academic duties. Because the non-academic population was small and the college library centrally located for the town as well as for the campus, demands made by those not connected with the college created no problem; instead they provided a splendid field for good public relations between college and community. The town council through the local school board made a small contribution toward general expenses and purchase of books, but it was only a token and there was seldom money enough for all that might have been done—as is usually the case in other libraries.

Because of the situation the college library operated a children's and young people's room, but it was evident that newcomers in the town were often reluctant to enter a college building. This was less likely to be true of children than of their parents, but it did seem unfortunate that some never learned that there was a children's room for them until they had been in town a good while. The obvious thing was to put a sign outside inviting children in, but there was hesitation about (1) asking for money for such a purpose, (2) how to design a sign that would extend an effective welcome but not offend the more pompous academic big-wigs on their way in and out of the building. Whether it cost much or little it had to be a good job that would be attractive to all. The librarian turned first to the art department of the college where a course in commercial advertising design dealt with problems of this very nature. After a few conferences the art people worked out a project and gave it as a class assignment. The results were so good that the question then arose of how expensive a sign could be undertaken, or, to put it another way, how could you make a cheap sign look like the high class article called for in the best of the designs.

When all concerned had agreed upon a metal cutout of two children reading atop a lettered wooden panel calling attention to the children's room, the next conference was with the department of practical arts where the librarian knew there were lathes and tools in great variety. He also knew they needed an occasional problem for classes to try their skills on. After a few weeks of study and preparation the practical arts people took the design and specifications worked out by the fine arts people. Metal workers got going on the cutout and wood-workers on the panel which called for incised lettering on irregular lines. Two weeks later the finished product was ready for assembly and the college maintenance department set two pipes in concrete and mounted the sign not only according to the original designs, but so firmly and securely that it resisted all efforts on the part of mischief-makers in the academic family. Total cost from the library budget was between three and four dollars for a piece of specially treated oak. Total cost if made commercially would have been ten or twenty times that amount. This long story is told not merely to show how easy it is to get something for nearly nothing; the important facts are (1) that no part of the work required was done by the library staff, (2) that the librarian knew the proper sources of help for something in which

he could not help himself, and (3) that he was acquainted with those who might help him before he needed their help.

A simple statement of appreciation in the form of a credit line may leave a more lasting impression than an elaborate, eye-catching spread of advertising copy; skilled publicity experts use both in proportion. In their efforts to avoid the charge of improper discrimination among commercial rivals dealing in library supplies and in book binding and book distribution services, librarians sometimes fail to take advantage of certain sources of helpful, practical advice that are close at hand and eager to be useful. Few librarians ever get into as many different libraries in the course of a year as do the business representatives who travel all over the country to tell librarians about new wrinkles in furniture, charging systems, plastic adhesives, and indestructible bindings. Some of these men and women are content to make their sales pitch and leave, with or without a liberal order on their books; many of them are conscientious servants to the profession, willing and able to share with librarians the fruits of observation and experience gained over many years. Some are library school graduates, which may disqualify them from mention in this discussion of "agencies other than libraries," but whatever their background no library school can compete with them on terms of wide and continuing knowledge of the way libraries look outside and in, the way librarians conduct their business affairs, and, incidentally, the speed with which library bills are settled. This last is something few librarians know about, living as they often do at the far end of a long succession of financial secretaries, budget officers, treasurers, city, county, and state officials.

Every good librarian knows how to deal firmly but politely with the few remaining specimens of the old-time itinerant book agent who had a memorized piece to repeat at each stop, who was thrown into complete confusion and a dangerous emotional state if anyone interrupted him before he got through his harangue. But in our anxiety to avoid the unwelcome bores and our equal concern to be as fair as we can with all proper visitors, we sometimes fail to make situations easy for valuable cooperation with "agencies other than libraries," whose agents (literally) are both willing and able. I speak not here of the splendid help a firm will give you when a commission is in clear prospect, or the lavish and sometimes almost embarrassing attention one gets from "the exhibitors" at state and national conferences. These things have their place in business for those who sell as well as for those of us who buy, although not everyone agrees as to their relative importance, or precisely how they ought to be conducted. What I want to point out is that among the men who manufacture and sell things to libraries there is a vast amount of wisdom and know-how about all sorts of library problems, much of which is never offered for sale or itemized in the bill, but virtually all of which is available under proper conditions of mutual cooperation if we remember to employ this channel.

No librarian has a monopoly, nor yet a dearth, of opportunity for working with agencies, commercial or voluntary, outside the circle of his profession. The variety is infinite, the rewards are often beyond calculation, but the initiative and direction can come only from the librarian who is alert, well-informed, well-acquainted in the community beyond those who are active library users. Above all, the librarian must know how to cooperate without abusing good nature or exhausting patience, without losing dignity or dissipating personal effectiveness. The local barber and the local tycoon will be equally happy to cooperate with the librarian who handles cooperation so that it is never mistaken for favoritism or for charity.

Communications:

The Key to Cooperation

by NETTIE B. TAYLOR, *Supervisor,*

County and Institution Libraries, and *Director,*

Maryland Library-Community Project

It seems axiomatic to state that cooperation among agencies and groups has to be based upon mutual knowledge of the purposes and resources of each agency and upon open and much-used avenues of communication with each other. A service agency, including the public library, which finds itself ignored or misunderstood by the general public or by other educational agencies is generally one which sticks closely to a narrow concept of its own function, ignoring a larger concept of responsibility for community-wide interaction and service. In a certain community in a questionnaire on agency activities the question was asked, "With what other agencies and groups do you cooperate?" One agency's response was, "We have no time to cooperate"—but the same agency indicated later in the same questionnaire that one of its major problems was that so few people knew what it had to offer! Fortunately, this was not the public library. However, I believe that one valid criterion for judging a library's effectiveness is how well it has brought its resources to bear upon the vital concerns of the community. In this kind of approach to the community and to the library's function, knowledge of and cooperation with other agencies is inevitable. Cooperation takes many forms too numerous to attempt to list but it always involves mutual understanding of purposes and resources and it is always a two-way process. The library is fulfilling one of its functions when it helps other educational groups to better carry out their own responsibilities.

I have seen a great deal of cooperation going on among public libraries and community agencies and groups, much of it not designed or carried out under any such label; in fact, much of it is not designed at all—it just sort of happens and is nonetheless effective because of the ease and informality with which it occurs. However, the experience of the Library-Community Study project in Wicomico County has shown that a certain amount of purpose and organization in learning about this segment of the community can be a profitable and valuable beginning for effective library-agency cooperation. An interview with the head of each governmental agency on the programs and resources of the agency and on his ideas of community needs gave the Wicomico County Library an opportunity to broaden its knowledge of the agency. These interviews frequently led to later discussions of ways in which the library and the agency could work together. For example a meeting between the librarian and the county agents to discuss their respective roles in supplying and stimulating use of materials for farmers on farm techniques

and problems resulted in a clear understanding of the types of material each agency could best provide and made it possible to set up a policy for referral of certain questions. It also determined the library's policy for the purchase of materials in this area. With the advice and cooperation of the head of the local U. S. Social Security office the library has purchased additional material on aging, has printed a booklist on the subject which is being distributed by the Social Security agency as well as other agencies in the community.

As the library and an agency learn more of each other's resources and programs, frequent referrals are made from one to the other. The library is beginning to set up a file on community resources including those of other agencies. Recently the library invited the heads of governmental agencies to come together to discuss the community problems and needs evidenced in the library-community study. After the meeting one of the agency heads remarked that these were problems that concerned more than one agency alone and it was valuable to have them discussed in such a group as this. The librarian is interested in and working with other agency representatives toward the formation of a community council or coordinating council of social agencies. This could provide an effective means for communication and the beginning of cooperative activities among agencies. The Wicomico County Library in cooperation with the Junior Woman's Club is maintaining at the library a community calendar of educational and cultural activities open to adults. It is now in the process of planning a Program Planning Institute for group leaders and program chairmen to be held in June.

These activities are not startling nor new. They are all related to community concerns brought out in the study. They are only the beginning of what is possible in working together. This library, as part of its community study, has been most systematic in approaching and collecting information from various agencies and groups and out of this has seen ways of working more effectively with them. However, getting to know the program and resources of other groups need not be a highly organized activity. Most agencies are interested in improving their service to the community and welcome discussion with librarians on ways in which their joint resources may be used in cooperative activities. Frequently the library must take the initiative in making contacts and discussing possible use of library services.

The public library has much to offer a group or an agency if it is sensitive to opportunities for service. At the recent Maryland Adult Education Conference a panel of representatives of agencies and organizations discussed "Working with the Librarian in Program Planning." The members of this group were accustomed to working with libraries, to using their resources, and yet in the discussion with librarians in the group many new ideas came up. The crux of the discussion was not only how we work with the library but also how we can get to know and work with other groups in the community with similar interests and needs. Can the library help by bringing these groups into touch with each other? The librarian who knows his whole community is better aware than anyone else of the purposes, resources and needs of these groups. Can the library find ways to bring these groups together so that they can work with each other? These questions present a challenge to libraries to assume an active role in the community. Here again communication is the key to cooperation.

Cooperation Between the Library and Community Agencies

by MRS. MARION E. HAWES, *Coordinator of Adult Services,*

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore

In his introduction to "Public Library Service" Gerald Johnson writes: "there is the most urgent need for our people to broaden their intellectual horizon with all possible speed, for the moment of crisis is already upon us. It is not enough to train the rising generation to meet their new responsibilities, for irreversible decisions must be made before they come to maturity. It is the quality of American men and women who are already of voting age that will tell the tale." To meet these responsibilities in world, national, local or family affairs, men and women need not only the freedom to know but ready access to information and constant incentive to keep informed. Public libraries readily assume responsibility for providing books and other materials about people's problems and for encouraging their use through attractive booklists and eye-catching exhibits. Librarians rightly make much of the person-to-person relationship in informal reading guidance to adults who come to the library, haphazard though it be at times. Would the library serve the whole community better if it also worked aggressively to discover ways of helping those who stay away?

One reason why it is not easy to go beyond the library walls is that too little is known about adult learning and adult reading. It is a handicap which adult educators in both libraries and schools face. Three things we know: that motivation and easy access to materials are principal factors in encouraging reading and that many men and women get a deeper understanding and retain better what they learn if they have the opportunity to discuss, evaluate and exchange ideas with others.

Gregarious Americans like to do things together. Since the important thing is not that the citizens come to the library but that they be stimulated to read, why not encourage participation in discussion groups, library or non-library sponsored, and take the materials to them. The Decisions 1958 program is an example of a cooperative project, initiated in Maryland by the United Nations Association, which uses the incentive of meeting in natural informal groupings to study current issues. The Pratt Library has participated in promoting the project, issued a reading list to supplement the brief outlines and is maintaining a continuous, circulating exhibit, duplicating materials if necessary. There are many opportunities in a community for similar cooperation.

The first step, once the decision is made to pursue an active program of stimulation, leadership and cooperation with other agencies in encouraging reading, is to survey community resources: to compile a list of speakers, discussion leaders, musicians, key people who are skillful on committees or in public relations; to list the important organizations, agencies, and projects-in-the-making which offer possibilities for joint activities; to know something about their purposes, programs, methods of functioning, community status and possible library relationships.

If the library is a center to which leaders come for information, the librarian will be aware of community needs which are not being met or of interests common to several unrelated groups. It is safe to say that in many towns several organi-

zations have had one meeting on juvenile delinquency. If this is a local problem, why not meet informally with representatives from each of them to discuss the value of an all-day institute.

In many communities there are several local organizations which are branches of a national association which outlines possible programs for the year. These offer ready-made opportunities for library cooperation through reading lists, exhibits, and an invitation to program chairmen to meet with the librarian to talk about ways of using materials, to have a preview of related films, and possibly a session on leadership. In a smaller town in which a single organization may not have enough neighborhood units to promote its own training program, the librarian may assume leadership in proposing that several groups combine in appointing a steering committee to cooperate with the library in planning a leadership training or program planning workshop.

It is a happy situation when a local group approaches the library with the suggestion for a co-sponsored program. Such was the beginning of the Magic of Music Series at Pratt. The Women's Association of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra wanted to take live concerts out into neighborhoods where in an informal setting people might enjoy music and become interested in the Symphony's programs. For the third season, several branches have been chosen in different types of neighborhoods. The Women's Association obtains the musicians and arranges the programs. The Library makes the meeting arrangements, plans the publicity, and prepares an exhibit and reading list. The following article describes the organization of one of the branch programs.

A single meeting for a few key people at the psychological time, may have more significance than a whole series. A branch librarian, noting the concern of some of the ministers in a changing neighborhood in which tensions were developing invited the clergymen and leaders from all of the churches to a preview of films on intergroup relations. One of the ministers led a discussion on their use. A session with leaders is one way of reaching larger numbers with less effort if it deals with ideas which are of deep concern at the time.

These are examples of ways in which a community-conscious librarian may co-sponsor, initiate or cooperate in activities. The opportunities are limited only by time and staff. Hence the need for careful planning, fitting in long and short range projects. Discussion of possible fall projects at a spring staff meeting will bring in some fresh ideas and suggestions of names of people who might help, give an idea of local reactions and arouse staff interest to get behind the program. Actual planning may begin with an evaluation of the suggestions:

Is a proposed program clearly related to a community need or interest which will enlist the help of other agencies?

Which proposals will bring the library into cooperation with those groups which it wishes to reach or with which it can work most effectively?

How much time will it take?

What will it cost and what groups will share the expense?

With these decisions reached, definite planning can begin. It cannot be stressed too strongly that whether a project is sponsored by the library alone or in cooperation with several other agencies, an advisory committee from the community is a big help. A committee may seem time-consuming and often is but it also does things, if well chosen. Agencies have entrée to speakers the library could not get alone; leaders in special fields have subject advisory knowledge which the librarian needs; interested members may assume responsibility for publicity and even printing. Finally, a list of outstanding names on the back of the program adds prestige.

The staff should be adequately represented also. Such a committee should begin months before the date set for the program and should meet regularly, with subcommittees on publicity, arrangements, exhibits, program, and so forth with responsibilities clearly defined. Under the librarian's leadership, a good working committee can take a great deal of the responsibility.

Fall arrives and the institute or discussion series is about to start. The staff is busy. Then comes a series of telephone calls for book reviews, a regular service to groups, or for advisory service on book reviewing. Again the community may be called upon for help. The experienced reviewers may be enlisted to organize a book review training workshop of three or four sessions, not necessarily under library auspices but with the library furnishing materials and possibly giving demonstration reviews. A flexible program and a staff with imagination and expandable as well as expendable energy can accomplish the impossible.

One "Magic of Music" Program

by H. THOMAS WALKER, Branch Librarian,

Pimlico Branch, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore

In this period of acute staff shortages, it seems obligatory to do as much cooperative sponsoring of group activities as possible. Such an example is Pratt's Magic of Music series. Here is an excellent picture of library and community agencies working together.

When the Office of Work with Adults called, asking if we at the Pimlico Branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library would like to co-sponsor a music program with the Women's Association of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, our answer was an immediate—"Yes!" The reason was simple: most of the time-consuming work had been done for us.

The old saying that you can't track a rabbit without snow was certainly true in this instance. The musicians were presented through the courtesy of the Music Performance Trust Funds of the Recording Industries in cooperation with the Baltimore Musical Union (Local 40, A. F. of M.). All arrangements of the program were carefully worked out between the Adult Co-ordinator's office and the Women's Association of the Baltimore Symphony. Programs were printed well in advance and were distributed through our own library and other branches in our general area.

All publicity for the metropolitan papers was handled through the Central office and we were fortunate that an announcement of the concert appeared in the book section of the Sunday papers, the day before the recital. Staff members distributed silk-screen posters carrying pertinent information to the local shops.

A branch staff member took charge of making all display arrangements which *The Baltimore Beacon*, a neighborhood newspaper, was gracious in giving prominent, first page coverage to "a cultural event of great local importance." included a striking poster designed for us by the Exhibits Department and which was used in the lighted outside exhibit window along with books, jackets, music, and recordings. Interior displays and announcements of the program were shown throughout the library.

An up-to-date booklist, "Listen and Read," which was prepared by the Central Fine Arts Department, along with a book exhibit was sent to us from the Co-ordinator's office. This was set up in the back of the auditorium with charging machines handy for book circulation.

Several women from the Pimlico neighborhood were asked to serve as hostesses for the evening of the concert and they took complete charge of greeting the guests, distributing programs and booklists, seating, and finally arranging the drawing for two free tickets to a Baltimore Symphony Concert. Their help was invaluable.

When the big night arrived, January 27, 1958, the wheels had been so well-oiled that the program went without any difficulty. Our program featured a color film, *Mozart and his Music* which was introduced by the branch librarian and the "live" music was provided by the Dorubeto Quartet whose members are: Dorothy Gennusa, first violin; Ruth van Hulsteyn, second violin; Betty Parker, viola; and Wallace Toroni, cello. The capacity audience of 150 was overwhelming in its enthusiasm.

At convenient points throughout the evening the librarian had an opportunity to emphasize the services of the Pratt Library—its extensive book collections, music scores, recordings and films. The representative from the Baltimore Symphony also had a chance to explain its activities and scope.

The amount of work connected with presentation and organization of these concerts given by the Library, as has been shown, has been spread over a rather large area. The important thing to remember is that this was for a *series* of programs (which Pratt has carried on successfully for three years). The work that went into them has been used for *many* concerts, in *many* branches all over the city.

After all these years of concerts, what has been its impact and what have been the results? I think more people have been made aware of the many services of the library—both branches and central. Concerts have been brought to many who otherwise would not have had a chance to hear "good music." It seems eminently worthwhile.

What the School Libraries Do

by ELIZABETH HODGES, *Supervisor of School Libraries,*
Baltimore County Board of Education.

The school library is not an independent institution, but a service established to help the school carry out all aspects of its program. Such a service cannot succeed without the support and co-operation of many groups within the school and the community.

The most obvious opportunity for cooperation is between the library and the classroom. One writer has said that the best school library program flows out of the classroom into the library and back again. Evidences of this interaction may be seen when children go to the library to find information needed for class use, to follow up interest aroused by class discussion, or to put on display projects developed in class. In reverse, children take back to class materials which they have discovered in the library, or share in the classroom books which they have read and enjoyed during library periods. A group beginning the study of weather

or conservation or space travel may need a lesson from the librarian on how to find and use information related to these subjects—and will certainly need his help and supervision when putting these skills into practice. The teacher, for his part, supplies the motivation for these activities, evaluates the use made of the information gathered, and identifies pupils who need additional help.

Of course, this kind of teamwork requires careful pre-planning on the part of the teacher and the librarian. Such planning begins with cooperative book selection aimed toward building a collection to meet school needs. The teacher notifies the librarian of the kinds and quantities of material needed, and the librarian informs the teacher of what is available—either by preparing a bibliography or by helping pupils to assemble material for the teacher's inspection. The teacher shares with the librarian his more intimate knowledge of pupil abilities, interests, and needs in order that the librarian may do a better job of guiding individual readers. And teacher and librarian plan together how they will work with the group during library periods.

Art classes are particularly fruitful fields for cooperation with the library. Illustrating favorite books, designing book marks, and arranging bulletin boards are practical and interesting art projects. Art work, such as paper sculpture and ceramics, displayed in the library (along with related books) gives the room a festive air and brings in new readers, at the same time advertising the art department and giving recognition to students whose work is exhibited.

Similarly, the school shop can be called upon to print signs, construct display racks, or make measured drawings for proposed improvements in the library. In return, the library provides "how-to-do-it" books and subscribes to magazines of interest to shop classes.

In high schools, advanced typing classes need practical experience to give variety and meaning to assignments. No department in the school can furnish more different kinds of typing jobs than the school library. There are pockets and cards to be typed, book orders to be made out, bibliographies to be copied, catalog cards to be typed. Every gadget on the typewriter is brought into play when this work is undertaken, and accuracy of spacing and form are especially important. The library and the typing class derive mutual benefit from this kind of co-operation.

Of the many school related community groups whose interest and cooperation the library should enlist, the Parent Teacher Association comes to mind first. The school library is a favorite place for after-school meetings of parent groups, and a professional bookshelf for PTA use is a feature of many school libraries. The librarian is frequently called upon to share his wide knowledge of children's books with parents interested in helping their children to build good personal libraries, or during holiday seasons when gift books are being chosen. These are small returns for the excellent support given the school library by PTA groups. In many communities parents have taken the initiative in establishing and improving school libraries, not only by donating money, books, and furnishings but also by giving many hours of time to such tasks as processing books, typing, filing, ordering, and mending.

One particularly helpful service which the school library can perform for parents is to give them advice in choosing encyclopedias for home use. While schools do not usually endorse any one set, it is quite in order for them to issue a bulletin stating what encyclopedias are approved for purchase by the schools, where these sets may be seen, and where further information about them may be obtained. Parents who feel free to come to the school library to examine encyclopedias and to talk with the librarian about them make good use of this privilege.

Boy and Girl Scout groups make heavy demands upon the library and perform many services for it. Most schools find that Scout handbooks and merit badge pamphlets are among the most used materials on the library shelves. The help of the librarian is often sought by Scouts who are earning merit badges in book mending or in reading. The librarian who finds time to give this assistance builds good will for the library and often interests boys and girls in becoming library aides. The library should be a center for Scout announcements, bulletin boards, and displays—and of course it should subscribe to *Boys' Life* and *American Girl*.

Garden clubs often welcome the opportunity to co-operate with the school library. In one community, the club sends an arrangement of fresh flowers to the library each week; in another, a beautiful collection of nature books (chosen by the librarian) was given as a memorial to a former member. With the books came hand blocked book plates especially designed by a member of the club.

Ways in which the school and the public library can work together are almost unlimited. The Pratt Library and the Baltimore City school libraries have set a fine example of co-operation in book selection, in the preparation of reading lists, and in the stimulation of reading interests. In the counties various ways of exchanging ideas and services have been developed. Public librarians visit schools, school groups visit public libraries, and bookmobiles serve all groups as impartially as circumstances permit. The recent celebration of National Library Week provided an excellent opportunity for a common effort by the two services. Everybody made and displayed posters, planned joint programs, visited back and forth, entered each other's contests, and had a generally fine time.

One service to both school and public libraries deserves special mention for the effectiveness of its cooperation with all who call upon it for aid: The Division of Library Extension of the State Department of Education. Perhaps cooperation is not the right term for assistance that flows only one way; but whatever it is called, the varied and practical help available from the Division is an important factor in improving library service throughout the state. A telephone call or letter will bring a book by return mail; school requests for curriculum materials are filled promptly and intelligently; exhibits of new books may be scheduled to any part of the state; and thousands of books and books about books are available to the public at Division Headquarters five days a week. Maryland libraries are fortunate in having this rich resource center and consultant service to add strength to the program of library service throughout the state.

Cooperation

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January-March, 1958

Edited by HARRY E. FOSTER, *Technical Counselor*, Division of Library Extension,
State Department of Education, Baltimore

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Reference Services Division--Projects Committee

The purpose of RSD's Projects Committee is to consider suggestions of worthy reference or research projects to be carried out by the Maryland Chapter of the Reference Services Division of ALA.

The Committee has been formed and will meet shortly to decide how it will go about finding out what projects Maryland librarians would like to have developed.

Here are some of the suggestions already received:

List of Maryland Imprints in County Libraries.

List of "Pet" Files.

Finding List for Maryland Materials.

Maryland Historical Roadside Markers Indexed and Set up by Route Numbers.

List of Symposia Which Appear in Journals.

Index of Books and Stories Made into Motion Pictures.

Guide for Amateur Genealogists.

Index of Maryland Documents.

Index of all Fiction Mentioning Maryland or People from Maryland.

The Committee will be glad to consider any other suggestions that should be submitted. Send your ideas to:

Martha Ann Peters
Projects Committee Chairman
Maryland Department
Enoch Pratt Free Library
400 Cathedral Street
Baltimore 1.

Obligations and Responsibilities of a State-Wide Association School Librarians

by MARY HELEN MAHAR, *Specialist for School & Children's Libraries,*
Library Services Branch, U. S. Office of Education

Address to Association of School Librarians of Maryland, January 17, 1958

For some time, in the State of Maryland you have had an active and productive State association of school librarians, in which you have met your obligations and carried out your responsibilities with distinction. I have read with interest descriptions of your work in *The Library Card*, and more recently in *Maryland Libraries*. In the days when I summarized State Assembly reports for AASL, I was always impressed by the progressive activities of the Association of School Librarians of Maryland.

It is with temerity, therefore, that I attempt to discuss with such a highly developed group as you are the obligations and responsibilities of a State association of school librarians. It is particularly daring, for someone, not a Marylander, to attempt such a task, and I am certain that every idea I can suggest to you can meet with the response, "We've tried that." Perhaps the best service I can perform for you is to remind you of projects which you have used, and discarded, and which might be tried again.

I would like to base my discussion on a premise which you may wish to disagree with in our discussion period. I believe that the function of an association is to synthesize the thinking which is done by the individual members of the group, and to make possible the sharing of resultant professional ideas. This premise implies great flexibility of interpretation and use of the outcomes of the work of professional associations, to suit the needs of individual schools. It also indicates that the first obligation of an individual member of an association is to perform her own work creatively and experimentally, in the terms of the purposes of her own school, and the needs of the pupils of that school. We work together in the framework of our common goals of education, but we plan our school library programs, not by applying absolutely, recommended practices, but by using our own special insight into the personalities of our schools, and employing, rejecting, or adapting recommended practices. I believe this philosophy of school library service not only makes school libraries more significant in education, but produces stronger associations. In every professional association, we must both give and take.

There is hardly any need to remind you that for an association to work effectively it must first decide on a program, and then assign aspects of this program to committees who can work together for long enough periods of time to produce concrete results. It is especially important for many of these results to get into print, not only for use in your own State, but for distribution and exchange over the country. At the present time, there are many fine publications of State departments and State associations which are not known in States other than the one in which they were published, and these publications would greatly enrich the literature of librarianship and education.

I would like to suggest, now, a few "fields of responsibility" for a State association of school librarians. A great need would be served if an association worked

on techniques of book selection for special purposes. There are some good publications which describe general practices: the use of standard bibliographic and selection tools for children and young people. But beyond these standard tools, what sources do you use for books for severely retarded readers, gifted readers, vocational schools, modern language programs, advanced science courses, up-to-date reference collections? Should we consider for our secondary school libraries the inclusion more generally of comprehensive bibliographic tools such as the *CBI*, the *Bookman's Manual*, the *Book Review Digest*, and adult bibliographies of subject fields? Can we pool these resources in communities or counties, and share our knowledge in book selection committees? Can we suggest in a publication of our State association various methods of handling these book selection problems?

One of the problems attendant upon the selection of adult books for young people, and especially for gifted readers, is the limited number of special selection tools in this field. I am sure you have already reached out for *Good Reading*, prepared by the Committee on College Reading, Lenrow's *Guide to Prose Fiction*, Haines' *Living with Books*, and other adult selection aids to find books of interest and significance for the young adults of your school. This summer I read a Swedish novel, *Barrabas* by Par Lagerkvist, a book I had never happened to see before. It is a penetrating character study, with fine values, and written in a powerful style. It is also short, a quality which endears books to most high school students. As readers of adult books, I am sure you are always having similar experiences—finding and reading books new to you, and which your students would enjoy. Perhaps these reading adventures could bring about, through an Association committee, a new and fresh list of books for our intellectually curious young people. I think it would be interesting for a Committee to evaluate unusual, or little read, periodicals for the gifted high school reader. Some of the little magazines, like *Poetry* and the *Kenyon Review*, are of interest to some of our exceptional high school students, and there are many periodicals in subject fields—for example, architecture—which would be stimulating to young readers.

In both elementary and secondary schools, there is need for bibliographies of books and other materials on many subjects. One area which has infinite possibilities for lists is, of course, the social studies. These lists would be especially useful if compiled for units, rather than whole courses of study: Community life in other countries, the history of our State, Indians of North America—on the elementary level; the Industrial Revolution, Housing, Foreign Relations, on the secondary. With our renewed interest in science and modern languages, we need lists in both these subjects—and in the latter, of sources and books in foreign languages for our school libraries.

I would like to spend a little time on elementary school libraries. You have had some discussions on individualized reading, and its potentialities. This method of teaching reading has many implications for library collections in elementary schools—larger collections, and greater duplication of books, for example. It also implies increased participation of school librarians with teachers, in classroom procedures. As an association, you may be interested in conducting studies, in collecting data, or even just in making reports of observation of procedures in individualized reading and its effect on children. I think that both elementary teachers and elementary school librarians would be interested in descriptions of not only this method, but of the many different activities which you employ to encourage reading in elementary schools. When I visited Maryland a few years ago with Miss Graham, and attended county meetings, I heard many unusual ideas described for stimulating reading in your elementary schools. I told my students in Buffalo last year about them, and I hope your Association will publish reports of your truly creative work with elementary school children.

Some of you have had the opportunity to plan libraries in new schools. A great deal of information is needed on various plans for school library quarters, not only by the school library profession, but by administrators, boards of education, architects and others interested in schoolhouse construction. It is very difficult, and surely undesirable, to standardize school library quarters except in very general terms. Depending upon the philosophy, program, and size of the school, one school may need a story-hour room, another a library classroom, another conference rooms, and audio-visual rooms; some schools need all of these areas. A single blueprint for all school libraries is not possible. But we would greatly help ourselves and others if we described different plans for housing the school library, and at the same time described how these plans relate to our educational programs. Out of these plans could be evolved some concepts for the development of varied school library designs. A pamphlet which described different school libraries—elementary and secondary—of schools of different sizes, and types, would be a great contribution to education. I am sure that there are many interesting plans for school library quarters in the State of Maryland.

You have had for some time in Maryland an active association of student assistants. Some of you have worked very closely with this group. Perhaps you have already accomplished what I am going to suggest—but I think it would be useful, to yourselves, and to other States contemplating the organization of State student assistant associations, the evaluation of the effects of the student association's activities on students—in citizenship, reading, use of the library, and continued interest in the library or in entering the library profession.

School librarians and school library associations have become more and more aware of their relatedness to other professional organizations. A State association of school librarians can use to great advantage a professional relations committee which will develop cooperative plans for joint projects and programs with teachers organizations—elementary teachers, English, social studies, science teachers, for example, and with State organizations of administrators. Here again, the relation of school librarians in individual schools or school systems to members of these organizations can be translated into association relationships which will have impact over the whole State. Working on cooperative projects with other groups—for example, on bibliographies and methods for use of library materials in teaching—not only improves school programs, but develops partnership in education between librarians and teachers. Surely our role is one of cooperative endeavor with teachers, rather than the representation of our interests in education.

With the professional associations of librarianship we need to continue to work closely for all the common goals we share. As fellow members of the library profession we must work continually to establish permanent reading interests and habits, and to encourage the use of not only our school libraries, but college, university, special and public libraries. In Maryland, you have a high degree of cooperation between school and public librarians and libraries. There are many fine examples in Maryland of your work together—your joint association publication is only one of these. We need examples of ways in which school and public libraries cooperate in communities, and in county library service, and of the methods which you use for developing the use of the public library by school children. We also need cooperative projects with college librarians on reading, and on library instruction.

I have at last come to the last point. Perhaps this one could be a joint project of the Maryland Library Association (as a whole) and the Maryland Education Association. How much is done with our work in citizenship in schools and libraries on inculcating a sense of responsibility in young people for the support of schools

and libraries in communities? We have many pressing problems in our schools, libraries, and other community agencies. I believe our young people would be interested to learn what these problems are, and would develop a sense of responsibility toward the solving of these problems, and the support of educational institutions in their communities.

In working together we learn from each other. Any project which your Association assumes—a meeting, panel, clinic, or publication—becomes an instrument of in-service education. Cooperative programs develop the ability of each member, as well as the whole association, to contribute to the highest aims of education in its broadest sense. A vigorous State school library association attracts new members, and encourages fresh and creative ideas for library service to education.

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Believing that this Prospect of a substantial reduction in the cost may appeal to Directors of Institutions who found the earlier proposal beyond their means, this Second opportunity is made known to them with the earnest Request that All interested will instruct their Agents to put themselves in touch with the Subscriber.

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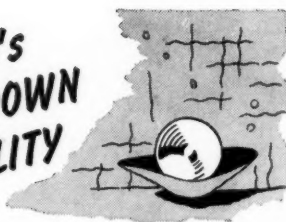
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